

## A note from Alexandra

Shalom, y'all!

It has been over 6 months since I wrote one of these messages in a weekly newsletter, and since we were able to gather in person.

Yet, here we are, about to embark on a radically different but innovative and vital year in the life of our Talmud Torah.

After months of planning and meetings and brainstorming, it is exciting to finally be able to launch our classes, in our revamped format, and see everyone's faces again. We have eager new (and returning) faculty who have been working for months, looking forward to meeting and teaching your children and enriching their connection to Jewish community.

It is only fitting that this Shabbat is Bereisheet, the beginning of the world, where creation begins anew. Not only that—the first day of Talmud Torah is actually Rosh Chodesh, marking the beginning of the new month of Cheshvan, a period without holidays (for once!)

It is worth remembering that, with the opening of the book of Genesis, the world is terrifying, nothing but "tohu va vohu" - often translated as a formless void. It is a scary dark emptiness, which humans don't know how to fathom. And yet, it is out of that emptiness that G-d creates light, starting the process of building the world.

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As scholar Miriam Faust writes, "These verses teach that what we perceive as most threatening and negative of all—a state of chaos—may be precisely what is necessary for creating something new and better."

We are, undeniably, facing down a very scary and unpredictable time in the life of the world. And yet, the teachers and educators and synagogue staffers (ok, and most people in general) I know have been digging deep down into their souls during this time, plumbing Faust's "cognitive chaos" to create new and meaningful ways to make Jewish life accessible, resonant, and meaningful. As we stare into this void and face, quite possibly, permanent changes to the structure of Jewish practice and observance, we are ready to confront the chaos and the darkness, to make things beautiful, meaningful, and new.

I am honored to be working with you all as your permanent EYD this year. You can always reach me for any questions or concerns that you may have throughout the year.

## Chodesh Tov!

**-Alexandra Bicks, Education and Youth Director**

## UPCOMING IMPORTANT DATES

**10/16-17: 9 am** B'nei Mitzvah Tutoring/  
Justin Spitzer's Bar Mitzvah

**10/18:** Talmud Torah Kickoff (1-7)/  
PreKadima Board Games

**10/21:** TT(2-6)

**10/23:** Josh Null's Bar Mitzvah

**10/24: 9 am** B'nei Mitzvah Peer Tutoring/  
Josh Null's Bar Mitzvah

**10/25:** TT(PreK-7)/Kitah Zayin T'fillin  
Workshop/Kadima Kickoff and Games

**10/28:** TT(2-6)

**10/31:** B'nei Mitzvah Peer Tutoring

**11/1:** TT(1-7)/Chadar Ochel/Kitah Gimel  
Family Beit Midrash/Kitah Zayin Family Beit  
Midrash/USY Kickoff and Games

**11/4:** TT(2-6)

**11/6:** Liora Lovins's Bat Mitzvah

**11/7: 9 am** B'nei Mitzvah Peer Tutoring/  
Liora Lovins's Bat Mitzvah

**11/8:** TT(1-7)/5th Grade Parents B'nei Mitzvah Meeting

## Happy Birthday!

The Beth El Talmud Torah wishes the following birthdays a Yom Huledet Sameach!

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**Leia F. (Kitah Vav) 10/17**

**Naomi P. (Kitah Gan) 10/19**

**Daniella D. (Madracha) 10/20**

## SUPPORT TALMUD TORAH IN THE EASIEST WAY!

Link your Harris Teeter VIC Card to benefit Talmud Torah! Here's how:

Visit the [Harris Teeter website](#) or, the next time you're at Harris Teeter, simply tell your cashier during check-out that you want Beth El's account number, 5883, linked to your Harris Teeter VIC card. Once the account number is linked, every time you shop during the school year, 2% of your Private Label purchases will be contributed to the Beth El Talmud Torah.



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## **WHAT IS CHADAR OCHEL?**

Approximately one Sunday each month, students in Aleph-Vav (1-6) will come together to sing some various holiday or Hebrew songs (camp style). Musician and teacher Spencer Garfield will lead us in song. Dancing and song requests are encouraged by all! We will do Chadar Ochel during Havdalah time this year, while we are all virtually gathered together. Our first *Chadar Ochel* of the year is **Sunday, November 1, 9:30 am!**

BYOB! (Bagels, that is!)





### COMMUNITY MIDRASHA TEEN CLASSES



#### JEWISH VALUES ON THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

Selections from the Shalom Hartman curriculum for teens

Through this course, teens will explore one of the most divisive issues affecting the Jewish people today. This course is also great preparation to meaningfully contribute to conversations about the conflict happening on many college campuses.

For 10th-12th graders, classes will be taught by Beth El Rabbi Daniel Greyber



#### JEWISH HUMOR

Explore the constructs of comedy in the Jewish culture. Teens will get the chance to laugh and learn about the jokes from the first people to those in the modern day.

For 8th-10th graders, classes will be taught by Mikko Rich-Vorhees



#### TUITION, SCHEDULE, AND REGISTRATION

\$36 /JCC and synagogue members	Five Wednesdays starting October 28
\$54 / non-members	• Humor: 6-7pm
Per person, per course	• Values: 7-8:30pm

Register at [levinjcc.org/calendar](http://levinjcc.org/calendar)  
Questions? Email [mseltman@levinjcc.org](mailto:mseltman@levinjcc.org)

**Mazal Tov to our Upcoming 2020**

**B'nei Mitzvah!**

10/16-17- Justin Spitzer

10/23-24- Joshua Null

11/6-7-Liora Lovins

11/20-21- Jonas Asher

12/4-5-Jack Hirschman



*Save the Date!*

**Kitah Gimel (Grade 3)**

**Family Beit Midrash**

**Sunday, November 1, 10:00 am**

Kitah Gimel parents should join their children's Talmud Torah class at 10 am for a special activity. They will then have a special parent class with Rabbi Greyber at 11:15 am. We hope at least one parent will be able to attend these very special classes!